

Report to Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting 25 September 2017

By the Director of Corporate Resources

INFORMATION REPORT

Not exempt



Horsham
District
Council

REPORT ON HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN PRIORITIES, FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE IN 2017/18

Executive Summary

This report gives the Overview and Scrutiny Committee information to help it carry out its role of monitoring the internal and external delivery of services by detailing how successful the Council has been in delivering against identified Corporate Plan Priorities. The Council uses corporate performance indicators; financial reporting and review of progress against key corporate projects to show progress against corporate priorities.

Three projects where the Council has made significant progress in the quarter include the Broadbridge Heath Leisure Centre; the redevelopment of Hop Oast Depot; and the Future Horsham Programme.

The financial performance is ahead of target at Month 4 of the 2017/18 financial year. Officers currently forecast a year-end revenue surplus of £177k.

Capital expenditure at month 4 was £16.9m which was 37% of the approved £46m capital programme including the £15m supplementary budget agreed by Council in July.

An analysis of performance indicators shows 62% within target and 13% close to target, and 25% below target and with no areas of major concern.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

having reviewed the data provided Overview and Scrutiny decide whether there is any further work they would like to add to their work programme.

Reasons for Recommendations

To enable Overview and Scrutiny to carry out its Constitutional role of monitoring the delivery of internal and external services and scrutinise any part of the Council's work.

Consultation: SLT, Cabinet members.

Wards affected: All

Contact: Dominic Bradley, Head of Finance, x5302

Background Papers:

Appendix A: Performance Issues dashboard Q1

Appendix Ai: 2017/18 Corporate Plan Priorities and Key Tracked Projects reporting

Appendix Aii: Q1 Monitoring of Key Performance Indicators Report

Appendix Aiii: Q1 Complaints and Compliments
Appendix B: M4 Financial Highlight report
Appendix C: M4 Revenue Summary
Appendix D: M4 Capital Budget Monitoring

Background Information

1. Reviewing the Internal and External Delivery of the Council's Services

- 1.1. One of the roles of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is to review the internal and external delivery of the Council's services. The Committee does this by looking at the Council's progress in meeting the Corporate Plan priorities, financial performance, key performance indicators, major projects' progress and complaints and compliments.

2. Monitoring Corporate Plan priorities 2017/18

- 2.1. Appendix A is a dashboard of our Corporate Plan and Performance Monitoring and appendix Ai give more detail on the Corporate Plan Priorities monitoring. Council approved the Corporate Plan in February 2016 and updated it for Year 2 in December 2016.
- 2.2. Broadbridge Heath Leisure Centre, the redevelopment of Hop Oast Depot, and the Future Horsham programme made significant progress in the quarter. The main building at the new Hop Oast Depot is completed and in use. The Leisure Centre build is underway but the area may experience parking pressures until the existing building is demolished.

3. Performance Monitoring

- 3.1. Appendix Aii is a dashboard of the Council's key performance indicators at the end of the first quarter of the Council's 2017/18 business year (ending 30 June).
- 3.2. The key performance indicators support the Corporate Plan Priorities 2016-19. Where possible, we measure performance in numbers against set targets. Where we have no control of volume, for example the number of cases or enquiries we receive, we just report the number. This allows management, Cabinet and the Committee to look out for early patterns that might indicate we need more or less resource in the service.
- 3.3. We updated the list of key performance indicators and targets as part of the development of the departmental service plans. We published [Service plans for 2017/18](#) on the Council's website in April 2017.
- 3.4. In quarter one 62% of indicators met or exceeded targets set; 13% were close to target and 25% fell outside of the target range.
- 3.5. Services management are focusing on at present are:
- 3.5.1. Cost of planning appeals. The Council had one planning appeal cost awarded this quarter. To improve performance, the Head of Development Management is undertaking a thorough review of all of the appeal decisions received from the Planning Inspectorate over the last 15 months to see whether there are any recurring themes. Council agreed that the Director can require cases which represent such a potential risk to be referred from the Planning Committee to full Council for determination.

- 3.5.2. Processing Housing and Council Tax Benefits. Following losses of housing benefit subsidy in previous years the CenSus Joint Committee advised the Benefits Service to focus on quality above speed at their meeting in December 2016. Therefore in quarter 1 processing performance of Housing and Council tax benefits fell below target but the accuracy rate improved. Quarter 1 figures were also affected by an issue with Royal Mail. Management are watching this performance to ensure we have optimal performance between quality and speed during the rest of the year.
- 3.5.3. Planning Income. There has been a slight down turn in planning fee income during this quarter; despite the number of planning and other applications being submitted comparing favourably to the same time last year. Management keeping an eye on this figure as a downturn in planning income is often an early indication of economic difficulties.

3.6. Management reports performance improvement in quarter 1 in:

- recycling levels;
- telephone call answering;
- time take to process planning applications;
- employee sickness levels.

4. Complaints

- 4.1. In the first quarter of 2017/18 the Council received 46 complaints and the Council's leisure centres received 73.
- 4.2. The trend of fewer complaints from the year 2015/16 continued into 2017/18 with the number of complaints 18% lower than the same period last year. The trend of recording more compliments than complaints has continued into the first quarter.
- 4.3. Appendix Aiii sets out a summary of the complaints feedback. The Council uses this feedback to prevent recurrence of the same problems, improve Council services and promote good practice.

5. Financial performance

- 5.1. Appendix B is the Council's Financial Dashboard. At the end of July the officers forecast a £177k surplus for the full financial year. Within the surplus, there are services spending more than their budget and others spending less but most of the surplus is where the Council is collecting more money than budgeted.
- 5.2. Appendix C is the Council's Revenue Dashboard containing managers' comments on the more significant differences from budget.
- 5.3. Appendix D is a summary of the Council's capital programme and spend on projects so far this year. Projects had spent £16.9m (37% of the programme) at the end of July, which compares to £2.4m (and 10%) at the same time last year. However, the total includes buying the Forum in July 2017. The remainder of the project had spent £2.4m at the end of July, the same as last year.

- 5.4. Project Managers currently expect to spend £38m or 83% of the total programme by the end of the year. This is higher than achieved in previous years so may be over optimistic. Projects expecting to not complete in the year are the Broadbridge Heath Leisure Centre build, further commercial property investment and two temporary accommodation opportunities.

6. Outcome of consultations

- 6.1. The Chief Executive and Directors together with the individual Cabinet Members have reviewed the reports contained in the appendices to this reports. Sections 3.5 and 4.3 tell Committee where officers are taking action on points of concern. Action on lesser issues is mentioned in the appendices.

7. Other courses of action considered but rejected

- 7.1. None. The Council must monitor its performance and take corrective action where appropriate.

8. Resource consequences

- 8.1. There are no staffing or direct financial consequences from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee reviewing this report.

9. Consequences of the proposed action

- 9.1. This report does not impact on Crime & Disorder; Human Rights; Equality & Diversity and Sustainability matters. Overview and Scrutiny reviewing this report and raising any concerns they have reduces the risk that management or Cabinet have missed any performance or financial trends they need to address.